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Wofür die unsäglichen Opfer gebracht werden? Wofür das deutsche Volk kämpft? Wir wissen es. Jeder deutsche Soldat weiss es. Er kämpft für alles, was ihm lieb und heilig ist, für die Sicherheit von Weib und Kind, für Haus und Herd, Heimat und Vaterland, für die Ehre, die Existenz des Reiches. Er kämpft für alles, was einen Deutschen zum Deutschen macht. Das Ringen der Grossstaaten auf Tod und Leben ist mehr als ein Kampf um äussere Macht. Mit dem deutschen Reiche steht und fällt letzten Endes die deutsche Kultur. Es geht um Sein oder Nichtsein des Deutschtums.

Und wir? Fragend, bangend, hoffend lauschen wir jeder wahren Kunde, die über das Weltmeer an unser Ohr dringt. Unsere Herzen sind übervoll; aber Worte sind ohnmächtig, den Sturm der Seele zu künden. Jeder von uns, selbst wer längst das Beten verlernt hat, wird voller Andacht den inbrünstigen Segenswunsch im Herzen hegen: Der Gott unserer Väter sei mit dem alten deutschen Vaterlande.

The Study of Literature.

By **Prof. Caroline T. Stewart**, University of Missouri.

We believe that most teachers of literature nowadays, even in secondary schools, have their students read as far as practicable the literature itself, instead of merely putting into their hands a history of literature telling about the productions of great writers. Yet a statement we read recently in one of the German periodicals makes us think that a few words about this matter may not be amiss. The statement referred to is by A. von Hug, in the "Literarisches Zentralblatt", July 27th, 1912, column 1011, in his criticism of J. Holtz and W. Deetjen's "Grundriss der deutschen Literaturgeschichte" (Leipzig, 1911, Quelle & Meyer, bound Mk. 2), and is as follows: "Insoweit man sich grundsätzlich mit dem an allen höheren Lehranstalten verbreiteten, vielfach durch die Lehrpläne bedingten Verfahren des literaturgeschichtlichen Unterrichtes einverstanden erklärt, das zumeist Literatururteile anstatt Literaturkenntnis vermittelt, kann man diesem Leitfaden manches Gute nachsagen", etc.

It seems to us it is possible for pupils to become acquainted with a good deal of literature at first hand. In our general courses in literature as well as in more specialized courses, such as Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, the pupils should themselves read the main literary productions under

discussion, instead of merely being told about them. Thus there would be more "Literaturkenntnis", more reading and investigation, and less of the dismal taking down and learning of lectures composed mainly of "Literatururteile". What the teacher has to say in the way of formal lectures, the "Literatururteile", may be handed to the student in pamphlet form, unless, for example in a Lessing course, the teacher prefer to place in the student's hands some such good book as R. M. Werner's "Lessing" (Quelle & Meyer, Leipzig, 1908, bound Mk. 1.25, or of Stechert about 30 cents). Then, in the classroom, if time be brief, the pupils may discuss, in a course in general literature, representative selections in such an anthology as that of Calvin Thomas (Heath), or Max Müller's "The German Classics" (Scribner). Or, if time be sufficiently ample, the teacher may have as class supplement the anthology with discussion and analysis of outside reading. From time to time the student may hand in the results of his investigations in the form of brief abstracts.

Thus, the teacher will not sit at his desk and merely read from his notes some such sentence as: "Lessing, in his earlier dramas, imitates the French, and, like them, observes the three unities of time, place, and action." Instead, he will direct some member of the class to point out in, say "Der junge Gelehrte", all the passages showing that the three unities are observed, as in the classic French dramas, or containing other evidences of French influence. If library facilities are poor, each member of the class possesses a cheap collection of, say Goethe's works, such as that published by the Insel Verlag, price about \$2.00 bound; or for a Lessing course a Hempel edition, or even the still cheaper Reclam, 25 cents unbound (poetical and dramatic works).

And so, in "Der junge Gelehrte", the student notices first the French names: Chrysander, Damis, Valer, Juliane, Anton and Lisette; and how, in III. 3, for example, Lisette reiterates frequently, after the manner of Molière, the oft-repeated "erst zwanzig Jahre alt". Then he points out numerous passages (III. 3, 8, 12, 14), showing that all three acts take place in the study of Damis, so that the unity of place is preserved; and points out references to time in the play, as in II. 9, 15; III. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 18.

The unity of action is more difficult to handle. If, for example, in "Minna von Barnhelm", the heroine, instead of devoting all her efforts to the regaining of Tellheim, had interested herself in such matters as social triumphs, court scandal, or political intrigue, the unity of action would be destroyed; we should have a number of subplots contributing nothing to the main plot, the re-winning of Tellheim. Even scenes five and six of Act I, where the "Dame in Trauer" occupies the stage, have been criticised as interrupting the action; yet we who venerate Lessing incline

to regard this episode as a valuable contribution because it shows clearly Tellheim's nobility of character.

As to Lessing's "Hamburgische Dramaturgie" and the "Literaturbriefe", who wishes merely to hear about these two works? The students should read them, should read of the former at least some such abridgment as that of Harris, published by Holt & Co., and of the latter at least the famous seventeenth letter. At the same time he can read about them in the pamphlet of "Literatururteile" mentioned near the beginning of this article. Then the pupil should be impressed with the fact that most of the German men of letters of Lessing's time did not yet know how to write; that is, that they did not know good models from bad; that Lessing was the first to assert that Shakespeare, after Sophocles, is the greatest tragic writer of the world. Then, too, Lessing counsels German writers, if they must imitate, to take as models the racially and temperamentally allied English rather than the alien French. This criticism from a man of letters of Lessing's reputation was gospel for Goethe, Schiller, and the other younger German writers: they obeyed Lessing's injunction and began to study and to imitate Shakespeare. So now the student will understand what it means to call Lessing a great critic.

One more word about the "Hamburgische Dramaturgie". In this work Lessing, a faithful adherent of Aristotle, makes certain demands of the dramatic writer; then he writes "Emilia Galotti" as an exemplification of the rules laid down. To what extent does Lessing carry out his precepts, among other things as regards the unities, historical truth, the tragic guilt of Emilia, the victory or overthrow of vice, the necessity of Emilia's death, psychological truth and consistency of the characters, the succession of events—whether they follow each other "as links in a chain", each necessarily resulting from the preceding? These and similar questions must be answered by carefully analysing the text itself. Furthermore, the student will wish to know whether these principles expounded by Lessing are still valid; that is, whether we moderns are safe if we construct a drama on the lines laid down by Lessing? Dr. F. Seiler, in "Der Gegenwartswert der Hamburgischen Dramaturgie", Berlin, 1901 (Weidmann), replies that Lessing's "Dramaturgie" is mostly antiquated. R. M. Meyer, in "Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum", vol. 46, 1902, p. 380 fol., answers: "Nein, wir lassen uns mit den kargen Resten, die Seiler noch eben lesen lässt, nicht abspeisen", etc.; and O. Behaghel takes up the defense further in "Literaturblatt für germanische und romanische Philologie", No. 10, 1905, col. 324, in speaking of Jacoby's "warme und eindrucksvolle Worte über die unvergleichliche Bedeutung der Dramaturgie" (review of "Quellenschriften zur Hamburgischen Dramaturgie" I., publ. by D. Jacoby and Aug. Sauer). For the benefit of those whose histrionic

ambitions are tinged by dreams of production on a New York stage, we may add, if you are a genius you are perfectly safe to follow in the footsteps of Shakespeare and Lessing; if you are not a genius, you had better, among other things, reduce your monologues to nil, and the number of your acts to three.

Is not a method of studying literature which inspires the pupil to read and investigate for himself better than one which just tells about literary masterpieces, or has students merely read the masterpiece aloud in class, or even translate it? Paul, in *Paul's Grundriss*, I., 2nd ed., p. 231, under "Methodenlehre" says: "Est ist selbstverständlich, dass man an Lessings und Schillers spätere Dramen zunächst den Massstab legen muss, der ihren vorangegangenen ästhetischen Schriften zu entnehmen ist", etc. We find something similar in "Monatshefte für den deutschen Unterricht", April, 1911, p. 109 fol.: "Heute verlangt man von einem Lehrer, dass er die jungen Leute in die Kultur jener Epoche, in die Gedanken- und Gefühlswelt des Dichters einführe, dass er mit ihnen in dessen Werkstatt eintrete", etc.

As Lessing is Germany's greatest critic, the question is, what does he advocate? Does he carry out his own teachings? And what was the effect on the literature of his time? Nothing said about literature can equal reading the literature itself. Fancy telling a pupil about Chamisso's "Salas y Gomez", instead of having him read it himself. What words, written or spoken, can equal the original? Is there time enough to do the suggested reading? Yes. It does not require more time to read the best products of a literature than it does to commit to memory a "pot-pourri" of "Literatururteile", as the student too often does. Has the present writer tried conducting such a course? Yes. With success? Yes. How many hours a week in the classroom? Three. How much ground was covered? From the beginnings (Max Müller's "Classics" supplemented by much outside reading) through Klopstock, Lessing, Wieland, Herder, to Goethe. Stopping at this point was not so serious as it sounds, as special courses in Goethe and Schiller were available, and later one in the modern drama was added to the curriculum. Was the class satisfied? Yes, but they wished to go on, and another time they will.